



# **MEDIA TRAINING GUIDE**

**TEAM BC MEDIA TRAINING GUIDE**  
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# TEAM BC MEDIA TRAINING GUIDE

## Successfully delivering media interviews and using social media

As you are training hard and getting ready to compete at the upcoming Canada Games, Team BC would like to draw your attention to an important aspect of your overall preparation: successfully delivering media interviews and using social media to build your online presence.

As an athlete, competing at the Canada Games is an inspiring opportunity to challenge yourself and raise your athletic profile. During the Games, you will meet other high-performing athletes and some of the best coaches and managers from across the country. As hundreds of thousands of Canadians will be watching, the Canada Games represent a golden opportunity for young athletes like yourself to raise your social profile and become a spokesperson not only for your team, but also for your sport and your province.

As an athlete representing your province, you can expect that your home town media will be looking to pay more attention to you and your performances. That means some media will want to profile athletes before, during and after the Games.

Team BC has created a simple guide to help you get ready to interact with the media and conduct media interviews. Through this guide, you will learn:

- How to get ready for a media interview
- How to deliver a winning media interview
- How to convey your messages with confidence

Throughout the guide, you are provided with sample questions and answers, as well as tips that will help you get ready and feel confident about doing media interviews. Watch for these symbols:

	Sample conversations including questions and answers
	Tips
	Do's
	Don'ts

Further to learning about media interviews, you will receive tips on how to best use social media. You will learn:

- How to portray you and your sport under the best possible light
- How to avoid the pitfalls of social media

If you have any questions about the content of this guideline, contact:

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### **Your Support Team**

As a member of Team BC, you will have a support team to assist with media relations. A member of the Team BC sport Mission Staff will be assigned to your team and the communications mission staff will also be available. Your coach will have their contact information at the Games.

The Team BC Communications Manager is responsible for all communications strategies, including media relations, social media and the website. The Manager along with the communications staff and mission staff will act as a liaison between media and athletes and coaches. They will arrange interviews by coordinating the timing and location, and ensuring athletes and coaches are ready by providing media coaching before the interview.

## PART 1 – USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a very powerful and effective way to tell your story, build your personal brand and connect with your audience. Through social media platforms, you can instantly interact with a large audience, but with that opportunity to communicate your story broadly comes a significant responsibility – maintaining a positive image and respectful dialogue at all times. Before you tweet or post to Facebook or Instagram, take a moment to review these useful tips and remember that whatever you post on the Internet stays there forever – like a tattoo. Even if you delete the post, there is always a way to retrace it later.

### Create a positive dialogue

Use social media to your advantage and to post content that will make you, your team and the sport shine. The content you post online shapes your public image and what the public – and potential sponsors – think of you.

Before posting, ask yourself:

- Would I be comfortable with the content being on TV or on the front page of a newspaper, e-newsletter, blog or web TV?
- Would I say this to a coach, a referee, a fellow athlete or a friend?
- Would I be comfortable with the content being attributed to me later in my career?

Anything you post to social media becomes public domain and will reflect on you as an athlete and a person. While it may feel normal to turn to social media to voice your opinion or share a story or something that just happened, it may not always be the best avenue.



#### A few tips:

- ✓ Take a moment and ask yourself if using social media is the best way to communicate
- ✓ Ask yourself if the content you're about to post is good for you, your team and your sport or your province
- ✓ Refrain from making disrespectful, defamatory and dishonest comments
- ✓ Refrain from sharing confidential and personal information
- ✓ Create a positive story and a respectful dialogue
- ✓ Create short posts that will engage your audience

## Team BC

Team BC leverages social media to post content that shines the spotlight on B.C.'s young athletes. Many stories will be shared through social media during the upcoming Canada Games and be sure to connect with us. You can share the content found on our social media platforms at:



facebook.com/GoTeamBC



@GoTeamBC



flickr.com/photos/team\_bc/



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2Uw3tq3xXk8UBt6fnS0qdg>



instagram.com/goteambc



Snapchat: goteambc

As an athlete, make sure that you follow your team's guidelines on the use of social media as well as respect Team BC and the Canada Games Council's social media policies.

To connect with Team BC, your Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) and others at the Games, have a look at the guide of handles and hashtags in the Appendix. There is a hashtag for every sport. Our main hashtags are #GoTeamBC and #WEareBC.

Follow the Canada Games at @CanadaGames.

## **PART 2 - Understanding Media (and what they are looking for)**

As an athlete you will have different opportunities to talk to the media. Since the Games are held here at home, you can expect greater attention from reporters, from your hometown's media to provincial and even national media.

### **What are media looking for?**

Media are there to report on events and tell stories. They are interested in talking to athletes, learning about you and your sport.

### **Who are the media?**

#### **Print**

Print publications could be daily or weekly newspapers or also magazines. In this case, the reporter will take notes or record the interview. He or she will use portions of the interview for the story. The reporter might ask to take a picture of you, might send a photographer to take a picture of you or might ask if you have pictures to share that the publication could use. Print publications could be the Vancouver Sun or community newspapers like the Prince George Citizen.

#### **Broadcast**

Broadcast media are televisions and radio stations. If you are doing an interview with a TV reporter, there will be a cameraman filming the interview or the reporter might use a video camera him or herself. Radio reporters have a microphone and will record the interview. In both cases, the reporter will use soundbites for the story. The interview might be live or recorded and broadcast at a later time. TSN/RDS are the host broadcasters and Global BC is the provincial broadcaster for the Games.

#### **Online**

There are a plethora of online news sources. Most print and broadcast news outlets have an online presence, and some will even create podcasts and webcasts. Some news outlets also use social media.

### **Where will media be at the Games?**

Accredited media have access to all of the Games venues except the Athletes Village. Often media will interview athletes or coaches at the venue either before or after your competition. Some media (like TSN) may want to arrange an interview at another location (such as a studio). The Team BC Communications staff will work with the media and your coach to arrange the best time and location for this type of interview.

## How do media arrange interviews?

Most often, media will talk to the Team BC communications staff, mission staff or your coach to request an interview. They will note the reporters name, media outlet and the topic the reporter would like to cover. Sometimes, the interview request is extremely timely and must be done quickly (after a competition for instance), and sometimes, media will give you a couple hours or days notice.

## What do I do if a media representative approaches me?

Always ask the reporter what publication they are working for (if not stated clearly at first) and what he or she would like to talk about. You can always ask for their business card if you're not good at remembering names! Don't be shy to ask about the angle of the story they are interested in, or ask them to explain the purpose of the interview if you are not sure or don't understand. Make sure to talk to your coach or mission staff right away to let them know about the request.



Sample conversation:

Reporter: *"Hi Julia. My name is Eric and I'm a reporter with a local media outlet. I am interested in doing a story on you."*

Julia: *"Thank you Eric for your interest. Can I please ask what publication you are working for and what topic you would like to talk about?"*

## If you feel comfortable talking to the media:

Let your coach and mission staff know about the interview request. With your coach, choose a time and place that is convenient for you and the media.

## If you don't feel comfortable talking to the topic:

Politely direct the interview request to your coach or to the mission staff.



Sample answer: *"Thank you for the opportunity. Please contact my coach directly or talk to Team BC Communications. They will look into your request promptly."*

## If a reporter asks you to comment on someone's poor performance:

You don't have to comment, but if you choose to do so, always remember that it is paramount to reflect positively on your competitors.



Sample answer: *"Everyone can have a bad day. I think it is more important to focus on the training that goes into getting ready to compete at high level competitions, including Canada Games."*

**If a reporter asks you to talk about a controversial topic, such as the use of performance enhancing drugs:** Make sure that you direct the reporter to Team BC Communications Manager or mission staff.

## **PART 3 – GETTING READY FOR AN INTERVIEW**

There are several opportunities for athletes and media to talk. Some reporters might want to profile local athletes a few days or weeks prior to the Games. Other reporters might want to talk to you on the day of your competition and some other reporters might want to speak with you right after your performance. There could also be opportunities for you to talk with media at press conferences or at team activities. When agreeing to do an interview, it is important that you select a time and place that doesn't interfere with your training, team events, nor your school schedule and works for the reporter.

We have created a list of the most frequently asked questions.

### **Pre-Games Interview**

- How is your training going?
- What is your training schedule?
- How are you preparing for the Canada Winter Games?
- What is your biggest challenge so far?
- How do you feel knowing you will be representing your province at the Canada Winter Games?

### **Game-Day Interview**

- How are you feeling?
- What is your goal today?
- How did you prepare?
- What will your biggest challenge be today?

### **Post-Competition or Post-Game Interview**

- How do you feel about your competition?
- Are you happy with the results?
- What went well today?
- What went wrong today?
- What was the key to your success today?
- How will you prepare for the next competition?
- If you could change one thing about your performance today, what would it be?

### **Feature Interview**

You might also have the opportunity to sit down with reporters for a longer interview and for which media will profile you:

- Who is your mentor or role model?
- What is motivating you?
- What is the goal you are working toward?
- What attracted you to the sport?
- What are your upcoming plans?
- Who helped you along the way?
- What are your athletic career goals?

## Practicing your interview

It is important that in the coming weeks, you take the time to think about the questions and how you would answer them.



### A few tips:

- ✓ To start getting ready, go through the sample questions below and write your answers down. Don't overthink your answers; keep them simple!
- ✓ Take the time to practice with a friend or with your family. Like anything else, the more your practice, the more confident you will feel during the interview.
- ✓ Don't try to remember your answers word for word. If you try too hard to remember exactly what it is that you want to say, you will lose focus on the questions and the interview.

## Determining your key messages

You might have heard the term "key message" before. Key messages are the main ideas you are trying to get across during the interview. Having a few strong key messages will help you respond to a variety of questions. When you sit down to start drafting your answers, think of some key messages you would like to use during the interview:



### A few tips:

- ✓ Having three or four key messages is plenty!
- ✓ Key messages are short sentences that can stand on their own.
- ✓ Key messages are what you want your audience to know and remember about you.
- ✓ Key messages use simple language; no lingo or jargon.
- ✓ Always tell the truth and be positive

Let's use one of the scenarios above to practice drafting key messages. Let's say you are doing a pre-game interview. You have asked the reporter what he or she would like to talk about and your upcoming participation to the Canada Games will be the topic of the interview.

The next step will be for you to think about what you want to say and what you want the audience to know about you. Some key message ideas could be:

- You want the audience to know you are excited about participating to the Games.
- You have trained really hard and you feel prepared, thanks to your coach and your family support.
- The Canada Games will be an opportunity for you to challenge yourself as an athlete and learn from fellow athletes.

Now that you have your three main ideas, try to expand on them. Add more details and build your story. Make sure your sentences are short and to the point. You will likely not say everything you have on paper during your interview, but this process will help you get ready. The fact that you have in mind some messages you want to convey during the interview will increase your confidence level, will avoid you not being able to answer the questions and will ensure you deliver a winning interview!

### **Team BC key messages**

As a member of Team BC, the organization is providing you with the following key messages that you can use while doing an interview and representing the province. Remember, the idea is not to use everything word for word, but rather to convey the idea.

#### **Team BC Key Messages**

- I am proud to be representing Team BC and competing at the Canada Games.
- I have trained hard to get here, and I am committed to achieving my personal best and contributing to Team BC's overall performance.
- I am grateful for the support from my coaches, parents, and the many organizations that work together to give me this opportunity.
- Thank you to all the volunteers who make these Games possible.
- As an athlete, the Canada Games are an important step in my journey toward my goal of one day representing my country

## PART 4 - TELLING YOUR STORY

Meeting with a reporter can be a little stressful, but have confidence in yourself, no one knows the answers better than you do!

### Defining soundbites

Soundbites are the key to good interviews! Soundbites are short sentences that stand on their own that reporters can use in their stories. Soundbites stand out because they have great information and they grab your audience's attention.

### Sample soundbites

During the interview, the report asks you "**Julia, how did you get ready for this competition?**"

A great example of a soundbite could be:

***"With the help of my coach, I trained hard the past two years. I kept my focus, worked on improving my technique and skating faster."***

Then you can go on and expand on your thought, but you have given the reporter a great answer that is to the point and can easily be inserted in a TV or radio interview.

### Delivering successful interviews

Now that you have your key messages in mind, it is time to deliver the media interview. We have identified a few tips that will help you deliver a winning interview:



#### A few tips...

- ✓ Start with a goal.
- ✓ Focus on the reporter and the questions.
- ✓ Be a credible spokesperson; know your information.
- ✓ Be conversational.
- ✓ Ask for clarification if you don't understand the question.
- ✓ Speak clearly and slowly.
- ✓ Do not use jargons.
- ✓ Have short answers.

### How do I look?

When doing an interview, make sure that you look presentable and professional.



#### A few tips:

- ✓ Are you wearing the designated Team BC clothing for media interviews?
- ✓ Ensure any personal sponsor logos are not visible.
- ✓ Do not wear sunglasses or hats if at all possible.
- ✓ Remove your accreditation badge.

## Body language

You may be aware that when people are nervous or unfamiliar with certain situations, they exhibit certain behaviours, sometimes without even knowing it. For example, some people might play with their hair or cross their arms or shake their legs. While you may be interested in the media interview and trying really hard to convey your messages, your body language could be telling a different story. To help you deal with that, practice interviews with someone that can watch for these behaviours and give you some positive feedback, or record yourself or practice in front of the mirror.



### A few tips...

During your interview:

- Sit straight and face the reporter. Show you are interested and focused.
- Make eye contact with the reporter.
- If you're doing a TV interview, don't force to look at the camera. The cameraman's job is to capture the interview, so focus on your conversation with the reporter.
- Don't lean forward to speak close to the microphone. The microphone will capture the ambient noise.
- Keep your legs relaxed and uncrossed.
- Do not sway from side to side.
- Remember to smile – even if the interview is on the phone, we can “hear” people smiling.
- Be energetic, confident and let your personality shine through.

## When meeting reporters

Meeting a reporter is a professional activity. It's an opportunity for you to shine in your community and build your profile, talk about you and your sport and maybe even score a sponsorship. Before going to do an interview, remember these simple dos and don'ts:

- ✓ Be on time.
- ✓ Look presentable and professional.
- ✓ Initiate a handshake.
- ✓ Be friendly and grateful towards the reporter.
- ✗ Don't lie or mislead the person interviewing you.
- ✗ Don't criticize teammates, coaches, officials or fellow competitors.
- ✗ Don't provide confidential information.
- ✗ Don't say anything is “off the record”.

## **PART 5 - Issues and crisis situations**

Even if all aspects of the Games are thoughtfully planned and executed, sometimes things don't go as anticipated. As an athlete, you might witness:

- An emergency such as a serious injury.
- A crisis situation such as a security issue.
- A Games-related situation such as a dispute of a result or drug testing.

If you are contacted by the media about any problematic situation, make sure you follow these easy steps:

**Step 1:** Inform your mission staff who will contact the Communications Manager and Chef de Mission.

**Step 2:** Do not agree to any interviews or post any information to social media.

**Step 3:** Wait for instructions from your Mission staff on next steps

In the unlikely event of an emergency, it is important that you carefully follow these steps in order to:

- Avoid communicating the wrong information.
- Avoid misleading (inadvertently or otherwise) media.
- Avoid spreading false rumours.
- Reflect positively on the Games and sport.

## **CONCLUSION**

We hope you found the information discussed in this guide useful. If you have any questions, you can contact a member of Team BC. Team BC Communications and mission staff are there to help you deliver the best interviews possible.

Good luck and don't forget to ***enjoy the moment!***

# Appendixes

For your information, we have included here many useful hashtags handles to use when connecting with fellow athletes and sharing stories around the Games.

## Team BC Hashtags

#TeamBC  
#WEareBC

## Canada Summer Games Hashtags

#JCG2017  
#CanadaGames  
#CGAthletics  
#CGBaseball  
#CGBasketball  
#CGCanoeKayak  
#CGCycling  
#CGDiving  
#CGGolf  
#CGRowing  
#CGSailing  
#CGSoccer  
#CGSoftball  
#CGSwimming  
#CGTennis  
#CGTriathlon  
#CGVolleyball  
#CGWrestling

## Handles

### Twitter & Instagram Handles – Canada Games Provinces and Territories

P/T Twitter	P/T Instagram
@CanadaGames	@canada_games
@2017CanadaGames	@2017canadagames
@GoTeamBC	@goteambc
@GoTeamAB	@goteamab
@goteamsask	@goteamsask
@TeamToba	@teamtoba
@GoTeamOntario	@teamontmedia
@EquipeduQuebec	@equipeduquebec
@Team_equipeNB	@team_equipenb
@Team_PEI	@team_pei
@teamnovascotia	@teamnovascotia
@teamnl	@teamnl.ca
@Team_NWT	@teamnwt
@SportYukon	@sportyukon
@TeamNunavut	

### Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) and National Sport Organization (NSO)

Sport	PSO Twitter	PSO Instagram	NSO Twitter	NSO Instagram
Athletics	@BC_Athletics	@bc.athletics	@AthleticsCanada	@AthleticsCanada
BC Wheelchair Sports	@BCWSA	@bcwheelchairsports		
Baseball	@Baseball_BC	@baseball.bc	@BaseballCanada	@BaseballCanada
Basketball	@BasketballBC	@BasketballBC	@CanBball	@CanadaBasketballofficial
Canoe Kayak	@CanoeKayakBC	@canoekayakbc	@CanoeKayakCAN	@canoekayakcan
Cycling	@raceinbc	@cyclingbc	@CyclingCanada @CanRoadCycling @CanMTBcycling	@cyclingcanadaofficial
Diving	@BC_Diving	@bc_diving	@DivingCanada	@divingcanada
Golf	@bc_golfer		@TheGolfCanada	@thegolfcanada
Rowing	@rowing_bc		@RowingCanada	@RowingCanada
Sailing	@sailing_BC	@bc_sailing	@SailCanada	@sail_canada
Soccer	@1BCSoccer	@1bcsoccer	@CanadaSoccerEN	@canadasoccer
Softball	@softballbc	@softball_b_c	@SoftballCanada	@softball.canada
Swim	@swimbcstaff		@SwimmingCanada	@swimcanada001
Tennis	@tennisbc	@tennisbc	@TennisCanada	@tennis_canada
Triathlon	@triathlonbc	@triathlonbc	@triathloncanada	
Volleyball	@volleyballbc	@volleyballbc	@VBallCanada	@volleyballcanada
Wrestling	@wrestlingbc	@britishcolumbiawrestling	@wrestlingcanada	@wrestlingcanada
BC Special Olympics	@sobcsociety	@specialolympicsbc	@specialOCanada	

## **Resources and links**

To familiarize yourself with Team BC's and the Canada Games social media policies, please visit the following links:

- [Team BC Social Media Policy](#)
- [Canada Games Social Media Policy](#)

For more information on media relations, you can read Canada Games dedicated media training guide:

- Canada Games Athlete Media Training Guide  
<http://www.teambc.org/Portals/1/Documents/Resources/Training%20Materials/Athlete%20Media%20Training%20Guide%202015%20%28eng%29.pdf>